UNITED
NATIONS

DP

Governing Council
of the
United Nations
Development Programme

Distr.
LIMITED

DP/1993/SCPM/L.3/Add.3
8 June 1993

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

STANDING COMMITTEE FOR PROGRAMME
MATTERS
Fortieth session
1-18 June 1993, New York

DRAFT REPORT OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE FOR PROGRAMME MATTERS ON ITS IN-SESSIONAL MEETING HELD DURING THE FORTIETH SESSION OF THE GOVERNING COUNCIL, 1-18 JUNE 1993

Rapporteur: Mr. Thomas STELZER (Austria)

Addendum

CHAPTER IV. UNITED NATIONS POPULATION FUND

(Continued)

Ethiopia

1. UNFPA proposed a comprehensive five-year population programme in the amount of $19 million, of which $11 million would be programmed from UNFPA regular resources. UNFPA would seek to provide the remaining $8 million from a combination of sources, including multi-bilateral resources.

2. The objectives of the proposed programme were to: (a) develop and implement the National Population Policy and a comprehensive Plan of Action; (b) expand and improve the quality of maternal and child health and family planning (MCH/FP) services in order to reduce maternal mortality and morbidity and infant mortality; (c) increase the contraceptive prevalence rate from 4 to 12 per cent and reduce the total fertility rate and adolescent pregnancies; (d) develop and implement a comprehensive national population IEC programme; (e) strengthen the national capacity to conduct population research and to integrate population factors into development planning; (f) help develop human resources to increase self-reliance in the design, management and evaluation of population programmes; and (g) improve the status of women and augment their participation in the development process.

3. Numerous delegations commented on the proposed programme. Two delegations asked if the proposed programme represented the best use of scarce resources. They felt the programme lacked strategic focus and that the resources were

spread too thinly over too many activities. One agreed with the programme's eight objectives individually but inquired if UNFPA could possibly do all these things given its limited resources. This delegation felt that data collection received too much emphasis; another delegation, however, felt it was appropriately funded. A third delegation asked if the programme included activities in Eritrea or if it dealt only with Ethiopia.

4. The Director, AD, noted that the delegate answered his own question when he said he agreed with all eight objectives individually. All were important to the success of the programme. UNFPA was the major external assistance agency in the population field in Ethiopia. It therefore had the responsibility to take the lead. As other donors began to support and participate in individual areas, UNFPA could then concentrate on the other areas. The Director stressed that the census was particularly crucial at this time, particularly in view of the dramatic changes taking place in the country. Moreover, it was a government priority. The Fund hoped to attract substantial additional support for the census. This was discussed at a meeting convened by the Government in May, although the results of that meeting were not yet known. He clarified that the proposed programme did not include Eritrea.

5. The Standing Committee recommended that the Governing Council approve the third UNFPA country programme for Ethiopia (DP/FPA/CP/132).

Guinea-Bissau

6. UNFPA proposed a comprehensive five-year population programme in the amount of $3.8 million, of which $2.6 million would be programmed from UNFPA regular resources. UNFPA would seek to provide the remaining $1.2 million from a combination of sources, including multi-bilateral resources.

7. The broad objectives of the proposed programme were to: (a) strengthen and expand the integrated family planning programme of the Government by promoting family planning both in and outside health facilities; (b) sensitize the population in general and leaders in particular and bring about changes in attitudes towards population and family planning issues; and (c) provide a coherent framework for all population activities through support for the preparation of a population policy.

8. Several delegations commented on the proposed programme. One said it would like to see UNFPA work more closely with NGOs and with national organizations. This delegation asked how UNFPA planned to distribute contraceptives to the rural population, which made up 80 per cent of the total population. This point was echoed by another delegation, who felt that the family planning activities of the programme seemed to focus on urban facilities. This same delegation thought it might be more effective to involve NGOs in efforts to strengthen women's activities rather than use the newly established Ministry for the Promotion of Women for this purpose. A third delegation inquired why adolescents and young males had not been addressed in the programme.

9. The Director, AD, said that UNFPA planned to make use of the UNICEF service delivery network in rural areas, as well as those of NGOs, to distribute contraceptives. He said that the programme did address the needs of adolescent

males, but did so indirectly through family life education in the formal school system. He said that the Fund also hoped to reach adolescents through its information, education and communication activities.

10. The Standing Committee recommended that the Governing Council approve the second UNFPA country programme for Guinea-Bissau (DP/FPA/CP/124).

Sierra Leone

11. UNFPA proposed a comprehensive five-year population programme in the amount of $5.2 million, of which $3.5 million would be programmed from UNFPA regular resources. UNFPA would seek to provide the remaining $1.7 million from a combination of sources, including multi-bilateral resources.

12. The immediate objectives of the proposed programme were: (a) to help reduce maternal and infant morbidity and mortality levels by extending family planning services, increasing contraceptive prevalence and promoting responsible parenthood; (b) to support action-oriented programmes in the area of women, population and development; (c) to strengthen the institutional capacity and develop the human resources needed to implement the country's population programme successfully; and (d) to help provide reliable data for national development planning.

13. One delegation commended the focus of the programme and the innovative use of the extended programme of immunization (EPI) service delivery network of UNICEF. The delegation also recommended making greater use of NGOs wherever possible.

14. The Director, AD, thanked the delegation for its useful and supportive comments.

15. The Standing Committee recommended that the Governing Council approve the second UNFPA country programme for Sierra Leone (DP/FPA/CP/122).

Uganda

16. UNFPA proposed a comprehensive four-year population programme in the amount of $14 million, of which $8 million would be programmed from UNFPA regular resources. UNFPA would seek to provide the remaining $6 million from a combination of sources, including multi-bilateral resources.

17. The proposed programme would seek: (a) to improve the availability, accessibility and quality of MCH/FP services in selected major health centres in participating districts; (b) strengthen information, education and communication (IEC) counselling and family planning services and create closer linkages among IEC, family planning and EPI services; (c) develop action plans to improve the health status of women and adolescents; and (d) help the Government develop a population policy.

18. Several delegations commented on the proposed programme. One felt that the programme employed a somewhat conservative approach given the magnitude of the

problems the country faced. His delegation would have liked a more critical analysis of these problems as well as greater recognition of the need to strengthen the country's capacity to monitor population activities. It also would have welcomed more attention to problems arising from low staff salaries. The delegation, noting that UNFPA would provide part of the country's contraceptive requirements, asked if there was any possibility of overlap with USAID in this endeavour. The delegation asked why UNFPA had decided to expand the current service network from 13 to 16 districts rather than from 13 to 26 districts, as originally planned in the document being submitted to the Council.

19. The Director, AD, said that low salaries for government staff was a problem for all donors in Uganda. UNFPA was working with other United Nations organizations to devise a common United Nations system of incentives, which, it was hoped, would help alleviate the problem. The Fund decided to scale back the number of districts from 26 to 16 because it realized its limitations. This would enable UNFPA to consolidate and strengthen service delivery in existing areas. The Director confirmed that USAID did also provide contraceptives in Uganda. However, UNFPA and USAID had a close working relationship in-country, and the two organizations routinely consulted on such programme matters. Thus there was no possibility of overlap.

20. The Standing Committee recommended that the Governing Council approve the third UNFPA country programme for Uganda (DP/FPA/CP/128).

Asia and the Pacific

21. The Director of the Asia and Pacific Division (APD) introduced the proposed UNFPA country programme for Pakistan, and the UNFPA Country Director for the Lao People's Democratic Republic introduced the UNFPA country programme for the Lao People's Democratic Republic.

Pakistan

22. UNFPA proposed a comprehensive five-year population programme in the amount of $30 million, of which $20 million would be programmed from UNFPA regular resources. UNFPA would seek to provide the remaining $10 million from a combination of sources, including multi-bilateral resources.

23. The proposed programme would seek to assist the Government in, inter alia: (a) expanding the coverage of family planning services, including contraceptives, and improving the training programme for village-level family planning field-workers and their supervisors; (b) supporting NGOs in launching innovative projects in family planning and expanding service networks in rural areas; (c) developing and launching a national population communication plan; and (d) enhancing the capability of the federal Ministry of Population Welfare and provincial Departments of Population Welfare to plan, implement and monitor population programmes.

24. Numerous delegations commented on the proposed programme. Several appreciated the focus on rural areas and welcomed UNFPA's efforts to strengthen

the status of women. One delegation, noting the ambitiousness of the programme, asked if it was too optimistic, particularly in view of the Fund's past experiences in the country. Another delegation commended the Fund for the innovativeness of the programme, in particular the programme to train a cadre of female villagers in family planning techniques and family planning motivation. This delegation emphasized the need to develop method-specific information materials for use during counselling on family planning.

25. The Director, APD, thanked delegations for their strong support and constructive suggestions. He agreed that the programme was optimistic, but he felt that such optimism was warranted. Unlike past efforts in Pakistan, this programme was focused in the rural areas and made extensive use of village volunteers and village workers. The programme was based in the rural areas, supervised in the rural areas and backed by appropriate training and an adequate supply of contraceptives.

26. The Standing Committee recommended that the Governing Council approve the fifth UNFPA country programme for Pakistan (DP/FPA/CP/134).

Lao People's Democratic Republic

27. UNFPA proposed a comprehensive four-year population programme in the amount of $3.5 million, of which $2.5 million would be programmed from UNFPA regular resources. UNFPA would seek to provide the remaining $1 million from a combination of resources, including multi-bilateral resources.

28. The proposed programme would assist the Government in achieving its expressed goal of reducing infant and maternal mortality rates by 25 per cent by the year 2000, primarily by promoting Safe Motherhood through the extension of MCH/birth-spacing services, and in developing the national capacity to integrate population factors into development planning.

29. Several delegations expressed support for the proposed programme.

30. The Standing Committee recommended that the Governing Council approve the first UNFPA country programme for the Lao People's Democratic Republic (DP/FPA/CP/120).

Latin America and the Caribbean

31. The Officer-in-Charge of the Latin America and Caribbean Division (LAC) provided a brief overview of the Fund's recently adopted strategy for the Latin American and Caribbean region. She noted that the strategy concentrated on improving women's reproductive health, with a major emphasis on reducing abortion and unwanted and adolescent pregnancy and on increasing contraceptive prevalence. She then introduced the two country programmes being submitted from the region.

Colombia

32. UNFPA proposed a comprehensive four-year population programme in the amount of $5 million, of which $3 million would be programmed from UNFPA regular resources. UNFPA would seek to provide the remaining $2 million from a combination of sources, including multi-bilateral resources.

33. The objectives of the proposed programme were to: (a) develop a formal and explicit national population policy and a comprehensive national population programme; (b) increase the use of effective family planning methods and reduce the unmet needs for family planning services; (c) increase the understanding of responsible sexual behaviour, responsible parenthood and family planning; and (d) strengthen institutional capacity to implement population activities, especially in the context of decentralization.

34. Numerous delegations expressed strong support for the proposed programme. One delegation sought clarification on the Fund's working relationship with the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), particularly in light of paragraph 15 of the document, which noted that PAHO had provided only limited technical advisory services in the previous cycle of assistance.

35. The Officer-in-Charge, LAC, thanked delegations for their strong support for the programme. She said that UNFPA had had a long and excellent working relationship with PAHO, both in the region and in Colombia. The Fund expected to continue to work closely with PAHO, although its role as executing agency in Colombia would be decided with the Government at the time of project formulation.

36. The Standing Committee recommended that the Governing Council approve the second UNFPA country programme for Colombia (DP/FPA/CP/123).

Guatemala

37. UNFPA proposed a comprehensive four-year population programme in the amount of $3.5 million, of which $2 million would be programmed from UNFPA regular resources. UNFPA would seek to provide the remaining $1.5 million from a combination of sources, including multi-bilateral resources.

38. The programme would pursue three long-range objectives: (a) the development of a comprehensive population programme legitimated by a population policy and integrated into overall government activity; (b) the provision of full access to the necessary knowledge, information and services for the exercise of the principle of "responsible parenthood and the right of individuals to decide freely the number and spacing of their children", as stated in the Constitution; and (c) the important participation of women in all population activities.

39. Numerous delegations expressed strong support for the proposed programme. Several asked, however, if and how the recent political developments in the country would influence the programme.

40. The Officer-in-Charge, LAC, thanked delegations for their strong support for the proposed programme. She pointed out that the programme was scheduled to start in January 1994. The Fund did not anticipate any difficulties in implementing the programme and hoped that the current situation in Guatemala would have been resolved by that time.

41. The Standing Committee recommended that the Governing Council approve the third UNFPA country programme for Guatemala (DP/FPA/CP/133).

Concluding remarks

42. In his closing remarks, the UNFPA Deputy Executive Director (Programme) identified three main issues that emerged from the discussions. The first concerned the structure and content of the country programme reports. UNFPA took note of the point made by several delegations that the reports were not sufficiently analytical or problem oriented. The Fund would review the basic format of the presentation with a view to improving it in these regards. He reminded the Committee, however, that the reports presented to the Council were based on the findings and recommendations of the Fund's Programme Review and Strategy Development (PRSD) reports, which were very analytical and comprehensive and also available to Council members.

43. The second issue concerned the focus of UNFPA activities. Some delegations felt that the Fund was trying to do too much with the fairly limited resources at its disposal. He reminded Committee members that UNFPA worked within a concept: to be effective, family planning services had to be supported by IEC activities, which in turn needed a strong national population policy and programme to ensure sustainability, which in turn required reliable, relevant and current data. He thus underscored that the concept was sound but that much more resources were required.

44. The third issue concerned the request that UNFPA include in its country programme reports information on (a) the status of donor coordination in-country; (b) the country's contraceptive needs and how the proposed UNFPA country programme would address those needs; and (c) the critical factors facilitating or constraining the success of the programme. He assured the Committee that all future UNFPA country programme submissions would provide information on these three items.